(e) Two Permanent Way Inspectors have been taken up under Railway Servants (Discipline & Appeal) Rules.

[English]

Increase in Inventory of Steel Products

2975. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been substantial increase in the inventory of steel products at various stockyards of the Steel Authority of India Limited during the current financial year so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons identified therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been increase in inventory of steel products at various stockyards of Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) during the current financial year. The details are as under :-

Stocks in Stockyards in '000 Tonnes

As on 1.4.1996	-	404.4
As on 1.12.1996	-	840.7

(c) The main reason for inventory build up is the subdued demand situation which, in turn, depends on interplay of a number of factors such as availability of funds with consumers, cost of credit, competition from domestic sources as well as imports, overall industrial growth etc.

Gauge Conversion

2976. SHRI K. PARASURAMAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken decision on the conversion of metre gauge railway lines into broad gauge in various parts of the country during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any such proposal for the Railway line between Chengalpattu Junction and Arakonam Junction via Kancheepuram;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be converted; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details have not yet been finalized.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) During the Ninth Plan.

(e) Does not arise.

Train Accidents Occurred in Bilaspur Division

2977. SHRI MANHARAN LAL PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of train accidents occurred in Bilaspur division between July 1, 1996 and October 30, 1996;

(b) the total loss suffered by Railways due to these accidents;

(c) the number of passenger trains/goods trains which were defferred for a long time during this period;

(d) whether priority is given by Bilaspur division to goods trains as compared to passenger trains; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) There were three consequential train accidents in Bilaspur Division during the period 1.7.96 to 30.10.96.

(b) The approximate cost of damage to railway property is Rs. 1.77 crores.

(c) As a result of these accidents, four passenger trains were cancelled, three terminated short of destination, one express train was run via a diverted route and 70 goods trains suffered detention.

(d) Passenger trains are given presedence over goods trains as per laid down operating procedure.

(e) Does not arise.

Entry of International Media

2978. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN :
SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to allow the entry of foreign players into the print of electronic media;

(b) whether his Ministry has permitted uplinking signals from Indian soil by private TV operators to foreign satellite;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether recently any private operator uplinked signals from Indian soil;

(e) whether a meeting was held in September 1996 to allow entry of foreign media in the country;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) Regarding Electronic Media, the Government is in the process of enacting legislation on